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How to Make Accessible D2L Pages

Students who are low-vision or blind utilize screen-reader technology to help them read the information within your course pages. This document will explain the steps you can take to make accessible D2L pages that will be compatible with screen-reading technology.

Utilize pre-developed accessible templates

This step is very important: Instead of building brand new accessible D2L pages from the ground up, start your project by building off an accessible template that is already pre-built into D2L. As long as you keep your formatting within the pre-determined template layout it should be navigable to screen reader technology.

How to locate the built-in accessible document templates in D2L

1. From the **“Upload/Create”** button in a module, select **“Create a File”**
 2. Name the file, and click the **“Select a Document Template”** button
 3. Select the type of template you want from the list provided.
- ❖ Here is a video that explains how to access and use the pre-developed accessible templates for D2L: [How to Use Accessible D2L Templates \(3 minutes\)](#)

Using headers is KEY

Headers are the structural markup to provide hierarchy of information within a document and allows screen reader users to skim a document efficiently. Think of headers like a table of contents for your document.

Heading Levels

Headers will help a student be able to quickly navigate to various sections of the page. The title of your page (if you have one) should be a Heading 1. Then the first section of that respective page should be a Heading 2. If you have subsections within that heading, it would be a level 3 and so on.

Formatting tip: Avoid underlining information. Underlined text indicates a hyperlink to assistive technologies like a screen reader. Reserve underlining only for navigation hyperlinks.

Font type matters for students who have limited vision

Not all font types are treated equally. In fact, there are font styles that are recommended because they are **easier for individuals with low or limited vision to read**.



Font types that are recommended include **Arial**, **Calibri**, **Verdana**, and **Tahoma**.



Font types that are not recommended include Times New Roman, Georgia, and Bookman Old Style

Color Contrast is also important for students who have limited vision

Sufficient contrast should be kept in mind during document creation to help make sure the information is viewable for individuals who have limited vision. A [Color Contrast Analyzer](#) can be used to help determine accessibility. With that said, fixing it using the accessibility checker would likely be an easier option (see helpful tip below).

- Make sure that the contrast between foreground and background colors is at least 4.5:1. (Black text on a white background has a very strong ratio at 21:1)

Helpful tip: If you are not sure if a text/background has challenging color contrast, run the accessibility checker on your document. If color contrast is an issue you will see a warning that says "Hard-to-read contrast"

Adding hyperlinks

In order to make a web address accessible to a screen reader, do not simply copy and paste a web address into a document. Instead rename it to help indicate where the hyperlink will redirect the person to when once they click on it.



PRO TIP: When adding a hyperlink, clearly name where the link will redirect to. Do not simply include the words "Click Here," "Click," or "More" because that will not tell screen reader users exactly what they are clicking on or where they can expect the hyperlink to redirect them to.

How to add in video links within your D2L pages

How you insert a video in D2L could limit students' ability to see the full video page that contains the details field and the transcript. If a video is embedded using the HTML editor > Insert Stuff button, it's best to add a URL link in addition to the embedded video. The "Video Page" document template in D2L provides a space for both an embedded video, and a "Direct link" to the URL - use both of these options when using this template. Additionally, if you are embedding a MediaSpace video, you can set it to include the transcript based on the closed captions. To select this setting before embedding the MediaSpace video, click the gear icon to the left of the Embed button,



and from the "**Choose Player**" menu, select "**Video player, includes transcript based on closed caption**".

Insert Stuff

My Media

Back

Embed Settings

Embed

Embed Settings:

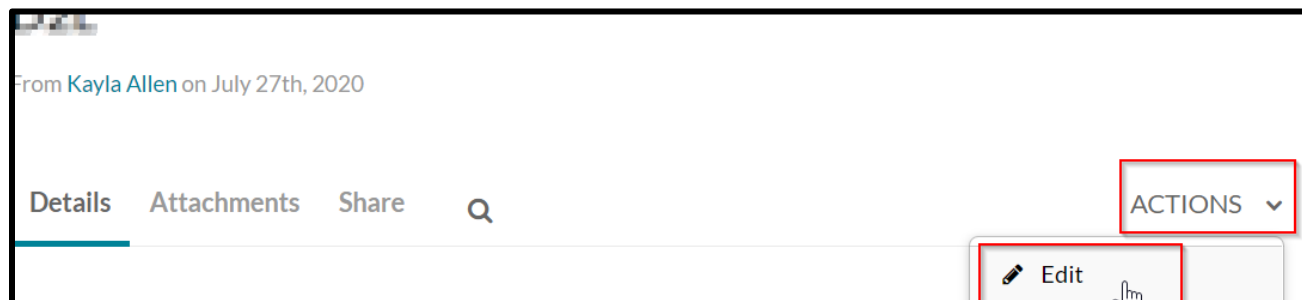
Choose Player

Video player, includes transcript based on closed captions

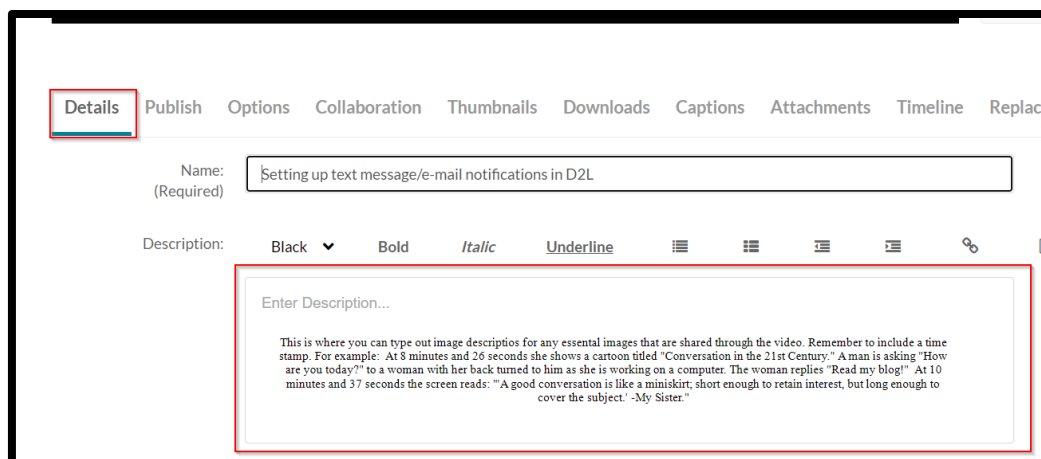
Adding image descriptions to your Kaltura/MediaSpace videos

An image description conveys the same or equivalent information that a sighted reader would get when they look at a picture, to someone who is blind or visually impaired. **If you use Kaltura/MediaSpace for your own lectures** (or you insert [YouTube links into MediaSpace](#)), you can first click to edit your video and then use the “**details**” field to insert image descriptions for the video (Also put a parenthetical in the video title to indicate there are image descriptions there). If you do add in image descriptions in the details field, you *should also indicate at what time stamp the image description is referring to*. Here is an example: [MediaSpace/image-description-example](#).

1.



2.

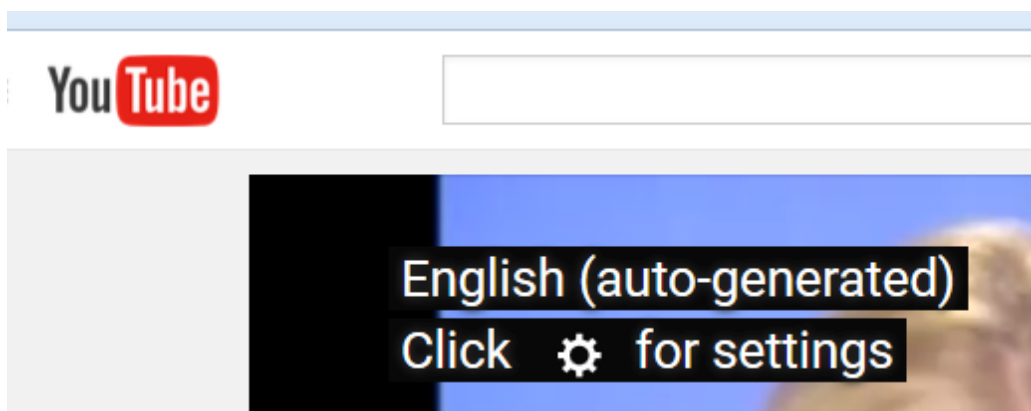


Adding captions to your videos

Captions allow students who are hard of hearing or Deaf to have access to follow along with the video by reading a sentence-by-sentence transcript of what is being said as the video progresses.

Please **do not** rely on the auto-generated captions in YouTube.

When you click on the CC button, you will likely see “English (auto-generated)” appear in the upper, left-hand corner of the video:




If you see that, it means the captions are created with speech-to-text technology rather than a human and are not very reliable. You can insert YouTube videos into MediaSpace in order to caption them: [Instructions on how to insert YouTube videos into Kaltura/MediaSpace](#)

How to add captions to your Kaltura/MediaSpace videos

- 1) [Order machine-based captions through MediaSpace](#) (these are automatically being added to videos now, but for older videos or YouTube videos you still need to do this).
- 2) [Edit the captions in the MediaSpace caption tool](#).
- 3) After you have edited them, you need to change the label that says “English Auto Generated” because that’s no longer true. In the edit menu under the captions tab, click on the pencil icon:

Details Publish Options Collaboration Replace Video **Captions** Attachments

Edit Captions Upload captions file

Language	Label	File type	Accuracy	Actions
English	English Auto Generated	SRT	85%	✓  ✕ ⬇️ 📺

❖ This menu pops up:

Edit captions

Language

Accuracy

Label

(text that appears in caption selector)

Cancel

- ❖ Edit it to be 100% accurate and to say something like “**CC-English.**”

Edit captions

Language

Accuracy

Label

(text that appears in caption selector)

Cancel

- 4) If, after attempting to do the captioning or editing yourself, you find that you need assistance, request it by submitting this [intranet form](#), which also contains a link to additional [MediaSpace Captioning Instructions](#) that show how to add a co-editor to assist you with editing the captions.

Adding alternative text to pictures

Alternative text, also known as Alt Text, can be read by screen readers, and helps people who are blind or who have low vision understand what images and other objects are in a document.

Adding alt text to a picture in D2L

Using the insert image button now provides this dialog box that has the actual Alternative Text field.

Provide Alternative Text

Alternative Text

Provide alternative text for the image. This text should convey the same information as the image. If this image does not convey any information, select "this image is decorative".

Alternative Text:

This image is decorative

OK

If the image was just copy and pasted in they wouldn't get the dialog box above, but could go to Image options and add the alt text to the "Alternative Description" box

1. Click on the image inside D2L's HTML editor



Insert/Edit Image ×

General

Source
/content/2022/5598384-CreatingAccessibleCourse

Accessibility

Image is decorative

Alternative description
toolbar from D2L showing Insert Attributes selecti

Width Height 🔒

Cancel Save

3. Enter text in the Alternative Description box.
4. Click Save

Adding a table in D2L

1. Place your cursor where you want the table to appear within your content.



3. Select the number of columns and rows on the grid and click your primary mouse button to insert.
4. After insertion, editing options are available by clicking the drop-down arrow to the right of the Insert Table icon or by selecting the table and selecting from the associated editing options.

Helpful do's and don't when using tables

- Don't use tables to set up the layout of a page
 - Why not? You may have materials in an order in your table that is obvious to a sighted reader, but not a screen reader.
- Make sure that your tables have a title/heading. Then it will be obvious to the screen reader what the table is going to be about.
- Designate column and/or row headers and do not leave any column or row completely blank.
- Don't split cells or combine/merge cells. This will make navigation harder for a screen reader!



Example of accessible table vs a not accessible table

Accessible

Table 1. Grading rubric for writing assignments. Lists categories, evaluation criteria, and point values for each criterion.

Possible grade	Length	Topic	Argument	Mechanics	Citations
A	The paper meets the page length requirement and is formatted correctly. 10 points	Topic fits the scope of the project, makes a clear argument. 20 points	Project includes in-depth discussion and elaboration in all sections. 20 points	No spelling and/or grammar mistakes. 5 points	Cites all information from out of class discussion sources. APA citation style is used in both text and bibliography. 10 points
B	The paper meets the length requirement but has inconsistent citation formatting. 8.5 points	The paper is focused but does not make a clear argument. 17 points	Project includes in-depth discussion and elaboration in most sections. 17 points	Minimal spelling and/or grammar mistakes. 4.25 points	Cites most information obtained from other sources. 8.5 points
C	The paper is up to 1 page too short or too long or is incorrectly formatted. 7.5 points	Topic is either too broad or too narrow. 15 points	Project has omissions of content or content runs-on excessively. Paper relies heavily on quotations for content. 15 points	Several spelling and grammar mistakes. 3.75 points	Cites some information from other sources. Citation style is either inconsistent or incorrect. 7.5 points
D	The paper is more than 1 page longer or shorter than assigned. 6.5 points	Paper does not stay on topic. 13 points	Project has cursory discussion in all the sections of the paper or brief discussions in only a few sections. 13 points	Many spelling and grammar mistakes that make the paper hard to understand. 3.25 points	Does not cite sources. 6.5 points



Not accessible

The below table contains the exact same core content as the previous example of a well-made table, but the following changes make it inaccessible:

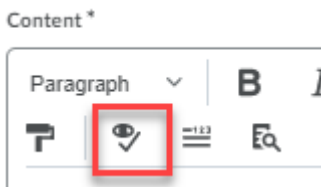
- This table does not include a caption that informs readers about the what this content is.
- This table is also missing the row and column headings that helped readers identify what each cell in the table means.
- The last column is a single merged cell that identifies the criteria that needs to be met to receive a certain letter grade. While this column certainly contains helpful information, it would be very confusing to a screen reader user because all of the information is contained in one large cell.

(Tables should not contain merged cells as they are difficult to navigate with screen readers.)

10 points The paper meets the page length requirement and is formatted correctly.	20 points Topic fits the scope of the project, makes a clear argument.	20 points Project includes in-depth discussion and elaboration in all sections.	5 points No spelling and/or grammar mistakes.	10 points Cites all information from out of class discussion sources. APA citation style is used in both text and bibliography.	= A paper	
8.5 points The paper meets the length requirement but has inconsistent citation formatting.	17 points The paper is focused but does not make a clear argument.	17 points Project includes in-depth discussion and elaboration in most sections.	4.25 points Minimal spelling and/or grammar mistakes.	8.5 points Cites most information obtained from other sources.		= B paper
7.5 points The paper is up to 1 page too short or too long or is incorrectly formatted.	15 points Topic is either too broad or too narrow.	15 points Project has omissions of content or content runs-on excessively. Paper relies heavily on quotations for content.	3.75 points Several spelling and grammar mistakes.	7.5 points Cites some information from other sources. Citation style is either inconsistent or incorrect.		= C paper
6.5 points The paper is more than 1 page longer or shorter than assigned.	13 points Paper does not stay on topic.	13 points Project has cursory discussion in all the sections of the paper or brief discussions in only a few sections.	3.25 points Many spelling and grammar mistakes that make the paper hard to understand.	6.5 points Does not cite sources.		= D paper

Using the accessibility checker

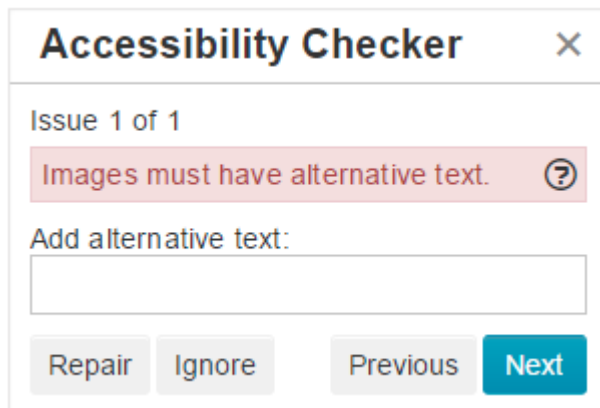
The Accessibility Checker can be found within the **HTML Editor along the top of a D2L page**. (If you don't see it at first, click the 3 dots **...** icon for "More Actions" in the HTML Editor to reveal the additional editing tools.) You can also select "Check Accessibility" anytime while editing.



What does the accessibility checker do?

The D2L Brightspace Accessibility Checker will catch common accessible issues on static HTML content (text, tables, images, etc.) and offer suggestions to help you fix the issues. *(Please note, the Accessibility Checker is not able to check for issues in dynamic content in your HTML page such as videos.)*

When you run the checker, it will check the HTML elements and ensure they are accessible. A common accessibility issue is missing alternative text (alt text) on images. Alt text is read by a screen reader in place of the image, which allows the learners with visual impairment to access the information and understand what meaning is being conveyed by the image. As a requirement of HTML standard, every image must have alt text.



While inserting an image within the HTML Editor, you are prompted to enter the alt text which will be automatically embedded into the HTML code for you. The Accessibility Checker will display an error message **"Images must have alternative text"** if the alt text is missing. It will then provide you the opportunity to repair the issue by adding alt text inside the report panel.